War Story of Kenneth D. Cooper
Written by his wife, Kathie after 63 years of marriage.

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Kenneth D. Cooper was served in the ~~Great~~ WWII War during the period of January, 1946 through November, 1947. He was eighteen when he enlisted. He was influenced to join ~~that~~ the ~~Navy~~ branch by his older brother. He was brought up on a farm in Kansas with seven siblings. None of them learned to swim.

During basic training he had to jump into a pool nine foot deep and swim to the edge. He did it, though very frightened.

Ken was assigned to the USS Dixie in San Diego. It was a huge destoyer-tender with supplies - medical and well as repair pieces for smaller vessels. After attaining the rank of Yoeman, third class he was assigned to be the secretary for Lieutenant Robb, whose office he shared, along with a chief petty officer. All were in the Engineering Department. During his stint of service he slept on his desk, which was wide enough for a mattress, covers and pillow.

Once Lieutenant Robb was on liberty, and an officer from a different department commanded him to type out an important paper for his department. All papers typed had to be exactly correct - no misspelling or punctuation errors. This was in the days of no white-out!) Ken was busy typing his own work for Lieutenant Robb, but complied.

When Lt. Robb returned to ship and found out what happened, he lost no time in repremanding the other officer and no one "borrowed" the skills of Ken after that. He was Lt. Robb's secretary, period.

Another duty was to repeat, verbatim, orders on steerage, specific numbers and directions, timing, etc.. It was extremely important to be point on . . .

Duties

Sometimes he had to assign work orders for a group of crewmen, such as the "painting crew" or "swab the deck" crew.

The ship carried untold amounts of medicine, and provided crew members of smaller vessels with specific medicine. Ken's job was to escort the needy sailors to sick bay or the pharmacy, where they were helped and escorted back to their tied-up vessel.

Two of the ports Ken visited were the Honolulu, Hawaii port and one in Tsingtaa, China. The latter was a 6-month docks, and he rode a rickshaw during liberty.

Ken witnessed a H-bomb test on the Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific, nine miles away on the U.S.S. Dixie. It was an incredible moment for the thousands of men aboard, and the highlight of his tour of duty. A test ship was blown up. It was a frightening aspect of the power that man had wrought. . .